

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

Thank you for your leadership and past support of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program. As you begin work on the Subcommittee's appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2015, we respectfully request that you include a standalone funding level of \$30,000,000 for the Bulletproof Vest program.

According to the Government Accountability Office, bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers since 1987. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership has helped law enforcement officers in 13,000 jurisdictions purchase over one million lifesaving vests that their departments would not be able to afford otherwise.


In recent years, demand for bulletproof vests has been outpacing funding for the program. In 2013, the program was able to cover only a third of the cost of purchasing a new vest, rather than half of the cost, as the law provides. This was due to both an increase in applications from local jurisdictions and a decrease in overall funding for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership. With state and local law enforcement already struggling under significant budget constraints, and the demand for vests continuing to increase, it is imperative that Congress continue to invest in this lifesaving program. Our support is critical to ensuring that both large and small jurisdictions can participate in a program that truly protects those who risk their lives for our safety everyday.

Our request is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, and the National Association of Police Organizations.

Bulletproof vests remain one of the primary forms of defense for our uniformed officers. As you weigh priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, we urge you to consider the proven lifesaving effectiveness of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,


KAY R. HAGAN
United States Senator


PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator




CHRISTOPHER A. COONS
United States Senator



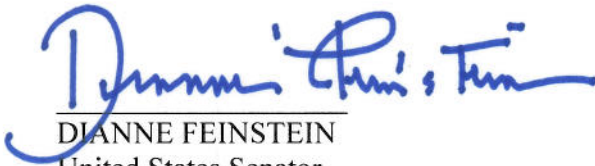
ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



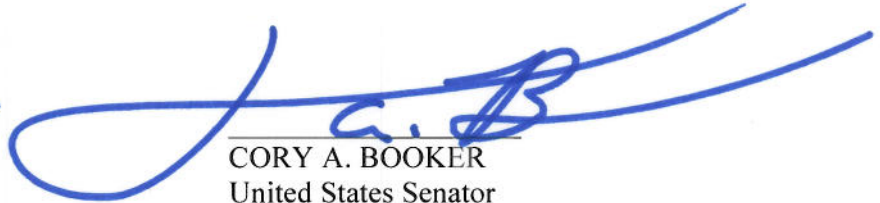
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senator



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator



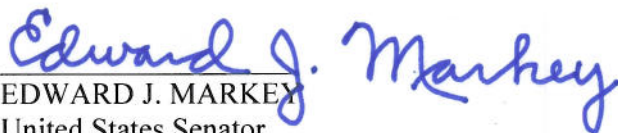
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United States Senator



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EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senator



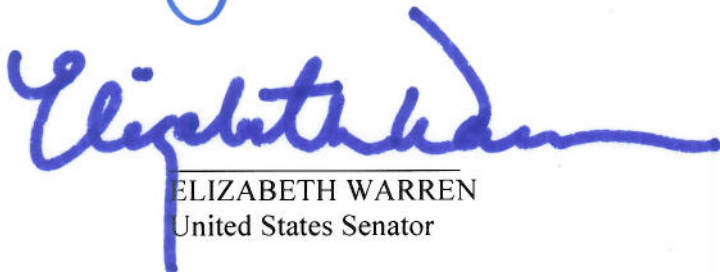
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United States Senator



JACK REED
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



BARBARA BOXER
United States Senator



MARK WARNER
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ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
United States Senator



MARY L. LANDRIEU
United States Senator